Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (previously presented) A method for treating diabetes mellitus in an individual in need thereof, said method comprising:

administering to said individual a composition providing a gastrin/CCK receptor ligand and an EGF receptor ligand in an amount sufficient to effect differentiation of pancreatic islet precursor cells to mature insulin-secreting cells.

2. (currently amended) The method according to Claim 1, wherein said ~~at least one~~ EGF receptor ligand is an EGF receptor ligand is selected from the group consisting of EGF1-53, EGF1-48, or its EGF1-47 congener of EGF1-48, and an EGF1-49 congener of EGF1-48.

3. (original) The method according to Claim 2, wherein said EGF1-53, EGF1-48, or its EGF1-47 or EGF1-49 congener is human EGF1-53, EGF1-48, or its EGF1-47 or EGF1-49 or its congener.

4. (previously presented) A method for providing a patient with diabetes in need thereof with a population of mature insulin-secreting β-cells, said method comprising:

providing pancreatic β-cells, outside said patient, with a sufficient amount of a gastrin/CCK receptor ligand and an epidermal growth factor receptor ligand to induce proliferation of mature insulin-secreting β-cells of said pancreatic β-cells prior to said transplanting, whereby an expanded population of mature insulin-secreting β-cells is obtained; and

transplanting into said patient said mature insulin-secreting β-cells.

5. (original) The method according to Claim 4, wherein said diabetes is Type 2 diabetes.

6. (original) The method according to Claim 4, wherein said gastrin/CCK receptor ligand is a gastrin.

7. (original) The method according to Claim 4, wherein said epidermal growth receptor ligand is TGF-α or an EGF selected from the group consisting of EGF1-53, EGF1-48, or its EGF1-47 or EGF1-49 congener.

Claims 8-18 cancelled

19. (previously presented) The method according to Claim 1, wherein said gastrin/CCK receptor ligand is a gastrin.

20. (previously presented) Pancreatic islet precursor cells treated *ex vivo* with a sufficient amount of a gastrin/CCK receptor ligand and an EGF receptor ligand to induce proliferation of said pancreatic islet precursor cells into mature insulin-secreting β-cells, whereby an expanded population of said mature insulin-secreting β-cells is obtained.

21. (previously presented) A method for obtaining an expanded population of insulin-secreting pancreatic β-cells, said method comprising:

providing pancreatic islet precursor cells with a sufficient amount of a gastrin/CCK receptor ligand and an EGF receptor ligand to induce proliferation of said insulin secreting pancreatic β-cells, whereby said insulin-secreting population of pancreatic β-cells is obtained.

22. (previously presented) The method according to Claim 21, wherein said providing is *ex vivo.*

23. (previously presented) A method for treating diabetes mellitus in an individual in need thereof, said method comprising:

administering to said individual:

a composition providing a gastrin/CCK receptor ligand selected from the group consisting of gastrin and cholecystokinin; and

an EGF receptor ligand selected from the group consisting of EGF1-53, EGF1-48, or its EGF1-47 congener of EGF1-48, and an EGF1-49 congener of EGF1-48;

in an amount sufficient to effect differentiation of pancreatic islet precursor cells to mature insulin-secreting cells.

24. (previously presented) A method for obtaining an expanded population of insulin-secreting pancreatic β-cells *ex vivo*, said method comprising:

providing pancreatic islet precursor cells with a sufficient amount of;

a composition providing a gastrin/CCK receptor ligand selected from the group consisting of gastrin and cholecystokinin; and

an EGF receptor ligand selected from the group consisting of TGF-α, EGF1-53, EGF1-48, or its EGF1-47 congener of EGF1-48, and an EGF1-49 congener of EGF1-48;

whereby said insulin-secreting population of pancreatic β-cells is obtained.

25. (previously presented) A kit for use in the treatment of diabetes, comprising:

pancreatic islet precursor cells according to Claim 20.

26. (new) The method according to Claim 4, wherein said pancreatic β-cells are obtained from a donor.

27. (new) The method according to Claim 26, wherein said donor is a cadaver.

28. (new) The method according to Claims 21 or 24, wherein said precursor cells are obtained from a donor.

29. (new) The method according to Claim 28, wherein said donor is a cadaver.

30. (new) A kit comprising a gastrin/CCK receptor ligand and an EGF receptor ligand.

31. (new) The kit according to Claim 30, wherein the gastrin/CCK receptor ligand and the EGF receptor ligand are included in a single container.

32. (new) The kit according to Claim 30, wherein the gastrin/CCK receptor ligand and the EGF receptor ligand are present as single dosages in said kit.

33. (new) The kit according to any one of Claims 30-32 wherein said gastrin/CCK receptor ligand and an EGF receptor ligand are concentrates.

34. (new) A kit for use in the treatment of diabetes, comprising:
pancreatic islet precursor cells obtained according to the method of Claims 21, 24, 26 or 28.

35. (new) The kit according to Claim 25, wherein said precursor cells are obtained from a donor

36. (new) A method for treating diabetes mellitus in an individual in need thereof, said method comprising:

administering to said individual a composition providing a gastrin/CCK receptor ligand and an EGF receptor ligand in an amount sufficient to effect differentiation of pancreatic islet precursor cells to mature insulin-secreting cells, wherein said gastrin/CCK receptor ligand is provided by administering one or more compound that increases the secretion of an endogenous gastrin or an endogenous cholecystokinin from a site of tissue storage.

37. (new) The method according to Claim 36, wherein compound is selected from the group consisting of omeprazole and and soy bean trypsin inhibitor.